Comparison Tool



The Alliance of Career Resource Professionals (ACRP) develops and promotes rigorous industry standards for career information products and services. These standards inform the development of products and services that meet the highest levels of quality and ethical practice.

ACRP developed this tool to help busy career development professionals compare career products and services before purchase. The tool's writable electronic format enables the user to compare products by applying ACRP standards constructs to key components of career information products and services. ACRP's intent is to assist counselors, administrators and others tasked with comparing systems that are often complex and organized in different ways.

The comparison tool focuses on the content and processes of the product or system. Other important considerations in selecting a career information product or service include:

- * Availability and extensiveness of user training and support
- * Cost
- * The commitment of the provider to ACRP standards
- * Opt-out provisions

ACRP is committed to high-quality career information resources that people can trust. We believe that optimal career development requires these resources to be readily available, easy to use, and based upon accurate information and valid processes for presenting the information. ACRP believes that it is critical that individuals have a source of understandable and relevant information they can use in career planning and decision-making. ACRP Standards reflect the highest level of quality in the field of career development.

For our members, adopting ACRP Standards is voluntary. ACRP does not certify or audit compliance with the standards. Compliance means that developers, managers and distributors of career information products and services must complete a rigorous quality-assessment for their product and publicly declare that it meets these standards. These products may then signify their compliance with ACRP Standards by posting the ACRP logo (above) with the tagline, "ACRP Standards-Compliant."

The complete text of ACRP Standards, instructions for administration, and glossary of terms is posted on the ACRP website at: http://www.acrpro.org/aws/ACRP/pt/sp/standards.

Instructions for Completing the Career Information and Service Comparison Tool

The next six pages contain the product comparison tool, which provides you the opportunity to evaluate and rate the importance you attribute to ACRP Content, Process, and Assessment Standards on a scale of 1-5 (Weighted Importance). Rate each factor according to the importance you attribute to that factor, then rate the degree to which each product you are considering meets the standard on a scale of 1-10 (Match Score). The form will automatically multiply the product of your two values to obtain your Total Score for each factor. After scoring each standard area, the form automatically tabulates your weighted totals for the three sets of standards to provide your overall weighted rating for each product evaluated. The three sets of standards are color-coded and labeled on the table that follows. If you need or wish to save this form, click **Save** or **Save a**s from the **File** pulldown menu at the top of the page and save the form. You can return and edit it later.

Career Information and Services Comparison Tool

Section 1: CONTENT FACTORS TO CONSIDER:	Weighted	Product:		Product:		Product:		NOTES
	Importance 1-5	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	
Career information comprises educational, occupational, industry, financial a		d related infor	mation for career	development	. Career informat	ion should be	accurate,	
current, developmentally appropriate, relevant, specific, understandable, and	unbiased.		1					1
Accuracy								
Currency								
Developmentally Appropriate and Relevant								
Specificity								
Understandable								
Unbiased								
Occupational information includes the basic characteristics of work being per	rformed by individ	duals who hold	jobs having simil	ar duties, leve	ls of responsibilit	y, skills, know	ledge, entry	l
requirements, and physical demands.				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		·· · ·		l
Includes 90% of employment								
Adequate descriptions								
Clear labels & reliable source								
Consistent presentation								
Clearly presented source materials								
Industry information includes characteristics of the labor market and econom	nic conditions affe	ecting employe	ers who produce s	imilar product	s or provide simi	ar services.		
General descriptions & types of employers								
Clear labels & reliable sources								
Consistent presentation								
Clearly presented source materials								
Education/training information includes postsecondary educational program schools, technical schools, and trade associations.	s and the schools	or other prov	iders offering ther	n, including p	ublic and private	colleges, unive	ersities, career	
Program & training information describes best characteristics								
School information describes characteristics of interest								

Section 1: CONTENT FACTORS TO CONSIDER:	Weighted	Product:		Product:		Product:	NOTES	
	Importance 1-5	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	
School inclusion policy is available								
Consistent presentation								•
Time period specified for education information								
Financial aid information includes sources of college student financial aid, pro scholarships, loans, and employment. Currency is of the utmost importance in				awarding such	aid. Financial aid	d awards inclu	de grants,	
Includes relevant factors for awards & indicates financial need								
Award inclusion policy is available								
Indicates number of awards & applicants								
Specifies deadlines and expiration of information								
Information reviewed annually								•
Privacy policy available when end users linked to relevant awards								•
Only relevant & necessary data collected for award matching								•
Personal data released only with informed consent								
Consistent presentation								
Job search information includes information about what employers seek in p documenting preparation, experience, and references.	rospective emplo	yees, job vaca	ncy listings, techn	iques for obta	ining employmer	it, and method	ds of	
Age and experience appropriate								
Associated costs clearly specified								-
Defined methods for updating time-sensitive information in place								
Localization Comprehensive systems provide mechanisms that localize key in product or may be a feature that permits product users to add localized information of the system of the sy		ent informatio	on in a localized co	ontext. Localiz	ed information m	ay be include	d as part of a	
Labor market information made available at state and sub-state level								
Education and training information made available at state and sub- state level								
Information of interest to users								
TOTALS FOR EACH PRODUCT	\rightarrow	TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		•

Career Information and Services Comparison Tool

Section 2: PROCESS FACTORS TO	Weighted Product:			Product:		Product:		NOTES
CONSIDER:	1-5	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X	
Search and Sort: Individuals need methods to find career opportun	l ities and optior	l 1s in systema	Match Score) tic ways, Entities d	l elivering searc	Match Score)	l nts should utili	Match Score)	
that are appropriate to the needs of the user. Searching/sorting pro								
of the process.		1		1	I	1		
Search characteristics relate to results set								
Search limitations clearly identified								
Delivery: For components to be useful, entities should deliver them		ner that user	s will be able to ac	cess the compo	onents, use or navig	ate them, and	know when	
linked entities or third parties are providing content or processes to	o the user.							
Provides appropriate contextual guidance								
Identifies components to be used with trained professional								
Appropriate interface for audience								
Interface accessible to person with disabilities								
Linked sites are audience appropriate								
Off-site links work and meet inclusion criteria								
Indicates to user when leaving site and provides aid for returning								
Accessibility: The comprehensive system should be demonstrably e	effective with a	nd accessible	to people of varyi	ng abilities, exp	perience, and backg	ounds.		
Equipment & technology usable and appropriate for audience								
Sufficiently intuitive & attractive								
Sunciently intuitive & attractive								
Easy for independent use								
Interface facilitates use for wide range of ability								
Enables use by persons with disabilities								
Provides alternative interfaces & delivery modes								
Confidentiality: The entity should strive to maintain the utmost con	nfidentiality and	d privacy of c	lient data and reco	ords.				
No data collected or shared without informed consent								

Section 2: PROCESS FACTORS TO	Weighted	Product:		Product:		Product:		NOTES
CONSIDER:	Importance 1-5	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	
Processing based on client data is explained to user								
Client records and use are secure and confidential								
Provision for erasing data after client use ceased								
Data used for research excludes personal data								
Career planning & management tools indicate who has access								
Users may save, store, or print information, as well as delete.								
Support and Services: Entities should provide support, technical as component(s) are being met. Some examples of support methods i							those using the	
Documentation available for all major components								
Documentation includes details								
Instructions and/or on-line help available for components								
Available assistance for information provided								
Available assistance for component operation								
Available assistance for users with disabilities								
Available information about organizational services & mission								
Technical assistance available and easily found								
Staff available to address end user and practitioner questions								
TOTALS FOR EACH PRODUCT	\rightarrow	TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		

Section 3: ASSESSMENT FACTORS TO	Weighted	Product:		Product:		Product:		NOTES
CONSIDER:	Importance 1-5	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	
Assessments provide measures of personal attributes, traits, interests, and ot be accompanied by clear instructions, statements of appropriate use, necessa assessment should be available.								
Need for trained professional indicated								
Technical information that permits judgment of the quality of the assessment is available								
Clear instructions guide appropriate use								
Provides proscriptions, as necessary, and disclosure of limitations								
TOTALS FOR EACH PRODUCT	\rightarrow	TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		
CUMULATIVE TOTALS OF ALL 3 SECTIONS FOR EACH PRODUCT	\rightarrow	TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		